



KICKING THE TIRES

How to Assess and Choose Community
Resources or Services to Maximize
Independence

OUTCOME

1. Research Vehicles (Tips for Choosing a Quality Program/Services)
2. The Test Drive (Questions & Observations of the Program/Service)
3. The Negotiation (Seeking the Important Details of the Program/Service)
4. Quality of the Parts (Questions Specific to Staffing)
5. The Warranty (What if My Program/Service Needs Fixing)
6. Customer Satisfaction Survey (Assessment of Program/Service)

QUESTION #1

- What is the most important factor in choosing a vehicle?
 - A. Performance
 - B. Looks
 - C. Gas mileage
 - D. Price

QUESTIONS #1 RESULTS

RESEARCH

- Who Should Be Involved?
 - Your child/student
 - The experts (Teachers, Therapists, Others)
 - Family

QUESTION #2

- How early should parents begin preparing for transitioning their child out of high school?
 - A. Three months prior to their 22nd Birthday
 - B. Six months prior to their 22nd Birthday
 - C. One year prior to their 22nd Birthday
 - D. More than one year prior to their 22nd Birthday

QUESTION #2 RESULTS

RESEARCH

- ◉ Identify your needs and desires (Types of services)
 - Continuing education
 - Work
 - Move out and be more independent
- ◉ Identify my skills and abilities
 - Is my child/student ready for college
 - Can they work independently
 - Am I looking to move out now or later

RESEARCH

- See What's Out There
 - Vocational program
 - Educational assistance programs
 - Day programs
 - Semi-independent living
 - Group homes

RESEARCH

- Obtain a List of Providers/Services
- Search the Internet (specific to location)
- Better Business Bureau
- Review licensing and monitoring evaluations

THE TEST DRIVE

- ◉ Set up a Visit
 - Call and speak to a person
 - Responsiveness when leaving a message
 - Ask for parent referrals

QUESTION #3

- ◉ What is most important to you?
 - A. A good BBB rating
 - B. A good referral from another parent
 - C. Good licensing/monitoring scores
 - D. Being able to speak to a person when scheduling a visit

QUESTION #3 RESULTS

THE TEST DRIVE

● Transportation

- Is transportation available?
- Does the program have a dedicated vehicle(s)?
- Is the vehicle(s) wheelchair accessible?
- Who pays for gas?

THE TEST DRIVE

● Transportation continued...

- Is the vehicle safe?
- Who owns the vehicle?
 - Agency
 - Staff
 - Hired transportation

THE TEST DRIVE

● What to look for at the visit

- The facility
- The staff
- The participants

QUESTION #4

- What is most important to see when you are visiting a program?
 - A. A clean program
 - B. Plenty of activities and supplies (games, computers, arts & crafts, etc.)
 - C. Good staff/participant interactions
 - D. Other participants that function at a similar level as your child/student

QUESTION #4 RESULTS

THE NEGOTIATION

- Are emergency access numbers available 24 hours a day?
- Does the program have extended hours of operation if necessary?

THE NEGOTIATION

- How long has the agency been serving the community?
 - Longevity matters.
 - Is the agency financially stable?

THE NEGOTIATION

- Attendance
 - How many participants attend the program?
 - Is attendance required?

THE NEGOTIATION

- Meals
 - Are meals provided?
 - If not, are appliances (i.e. microwave, refrigerator) available?
 - How are dietary needs met?

THE NEGOTIATION

- Cost
 - Are there additional/special fees that I'm responsible for?
 - What is my cost for the program/service?

THE NEGOTIATION

- Evaluating quality
 - How does the agency evaluate their own services/programs?
 - What is considered quality services?
 - How often does the agency self-evaluate?

THE NEGOTIATION

• The Transition

- How does your program/agency help with the transition of child/student?
- Can I attend part time?

QUALITY OF THE PARTS

• Staffing

- Are staff employees or sub-contractors?
- What is the staff/consumer ratio?
- What is the level of staff turnover?
- What is the vacancy rate?
- What is the backup plan if a staff person calls off?

QUALITY OF PARTS

• More Staffing...

- Do I have input in choosing staff?
- Can I interview staff?
- Can I use/refer my family members to provide support?
- What background checks are complete prior to staff employment?
 - Criminal history?
 - Sex offender?
 - Pre-employment drug screen?

QUESTION #5

• What is the most important qualification for a staff person?

- A. Well trained
- B. Clean background check
- C. Good references
- D. Professional appearance

QUESTION #5 RESULTS

THE WARRANTY

- What can I do if I'm unhappy with the program/service?
 - Is there a complaint/grievance policy?
 - Cancellation policy?
 - Will my current agency assist in my transition to another program/agency?

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

- ◉ Is my child/student benefiting socially from the friendships they have made at the program?
- ◉ Is my child/student intellectually challenged by the curriculum at the program?

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

- ◉ Does the program communicate well with me regarding my child/student?
- ◉ Has the program addressed my issues in an adequate and timely manner?

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

- ◉ Does the program offer participant choice in all areas?
- ◉ Does the program provide me with literature to ensure I know what my child is doing (i.e. calendars, newsletters, etc.)?

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

- ◉ Is attending the program a positive rewarding experience for my child/student?
 - Just like we hope this has been for you!

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY QUESTION

- ◉ Did this presentation meet your expectations:
 - A. Exceed expectations
 - B. Met expectations
 - C. Failed to meet expectations